

## Message Text

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PAGE 01      SOFIA 00771 261150Z  
ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA  
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E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: BTIO, BU  
SUBJECT: MEETING WITH MACHINOEXPORT

1. DURING MEETING WITH DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF MACHINOEXPORT, N. RANKOV (IMPORTS) AND N. MINEV OF EXPORT DEPARTMENT, SEVERAL ALLEGEDLY HIGH PRIORITY PROJECTS IN WHICH MACINO-EXPORT WAS SEEKING US PARTICIPATION WERE RAISED. BOTH RANKOV AND MINEV MADE CLEAR THE NEED FOR "BALANCED TRADE," AND SAIFHEY WERE LOOKING FOR PARTNERS WILLING TO ACCEPT COUNTERTRADE ARRANGEMENTS.

2. SPECIFIC PROJECTS IN WHICH MACHINOEXPORT CURRENTLY HAS INTEREST ARE:

- MANUFACTURE OF UP TO 200,000 STARTER UNITS FOR ELECTRIC TRUCK D.C. MOTORS AND 500,000 AUTOMOBILE STARTER MOTORS;
- PRODUCTION OF UP TO 2.2 MILLION ELECTRIC TRUCK BATTERY CELLS PER YEAR;
- MICROPOROUS SEPARATORS FOR BATTERIES.

THE LATTER TWO PROJECTS WERE MENTIONED IN CONNECTION WITH EXPANSION OF THE PAZARDZHIC BATTERY PLANT. THE US FIRM AMERACE HAS HAD DISCUSSION WITH MACHINOEXPORT FOR SEVERAL YEARS ON THE BATTERY SEPARATOR DEAL, AND THIS WEEK HAS A REPRESENTATIVE VISITING SOFIA TO CONTINUE TALKS. ACCORDING TO HIM, PLANS NOW SEEM TO CALL FOR THE

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MICROPOROUS SEPARATOR INSTALLATION TO BE LOCATED IN TORGOVISHTA.

3. ON SUBJECT OF RADOMIR HEAVY MACHINE BUILDINGS FACTORY PROJECT, RANKOV SAID MACHINEEXPORT HAD "URGENT" INTEREST IN ASSISTANCE WITH 60,000 TON STEEL FOUNDRY AND FOUNDRY WORKSHOP FOR THE PROJECT. (COMMENT: RADOMIR PROJECT JUST

GETTING UNDER WAY. NO EQUIPMENT IS IN PLACE, BUT SURVEY WORK IS GOING ON. AUXILIARY BUILDINGS AND TUNNEL FOR PERNIK-RADOMIR ROAD ARE UNDER CONSTRUCTION. RADOMIR WILL HAVE HEAVY SOVIET INVESTMENT, BUT, ACCORDING TO FRENCH COMMERCIAL ATTACHE, SOVIETS ARE TRYING TO HOLD DOWN BULGARIAN DEMANDS FOR LARGER PLANT CAPACITY THAN MOSCOW BELIEVES IS WARRANTED. DURING MARCH 12 VISIT BY SOVIET MINISTER OF HEAVY AND TRANSPORT MACHINE BUILDING, RADOMIR WAS PRIME TOPIC OF DISCUSSIONS, BUT BOTH SIDES EVIDENTLY WERE FAR APART ON THEIR CONCEPTS OF PLANT. END COMMENT.)

4. MITEV THEN MENTIONED MACHINOEXPORT'S INTEREST IN EXPORTING UNIVERSAL AND NUMERICALLY CONTROLLED MACHINE TOOLS, HYDRAULIC EQUIPMENT, AND WOOD WORKING TOOLS. (COMPANY LITERATURE FOLDED TO BEWT/M. HEGEDUS.)

5. REGARDING TIES WITH US, MITEV ADMITTED THAT MACHINOEXPORT DID LITTLE EXPORTING TO THE US, BUT SAID THERE WAS GREAT INTEREST IN COPRODUCTION, AND MENTIONED POSSIBILITY OF MANUFACTURING MACHINES OF US DESIGN FOR SALE IN THIRD COUNTRIES SINCE IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO SELL SUCH EQUIPMENT IN THE US DUE TO HIGH TARIFF.

6. MITEV ALSO MENTIONED HEAVY EMPHASIS CURRENTLY BEING PLACED ON ROBOTICS. HE SAID THAT SEVERAL DSOS SPECIALIZE IN PRODUCTION OF SUCH MACHINES AND THAT INVESTMENTS WOULD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BE QUITE HIGH IN THE FUTURE. HE STATED THAT MACHINOEXPORT HQD CONTACTS WITH 3 OR 4 WELL-KNOWN AMERICAN FIRMS IN THIS FIELD, AND LAST OCTOBER A BULGARIAN TEAM VISITED THE US. UNIMATION CORP., AMF, AND CINCINNATI MACHINETOOLS WERE MENTIONED.  
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